TECHNOLOGY SUPPORTED SELF-DEVELOPMENT FOR SOLDIERS
DEPLOYING TO AFGHANISTAN

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General Studies

by

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This study is a resource Soldiers can use to help prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan by creating a self-development plan using technology supported tools. First, the study identifies some types of knowledge technology supported tools can impart to Soldiers. Then the study catalogues specific types of technology supported tools including documentaries, movies, YouTube videos, iPhone applications, games, and language training software. Next, the study assesses which of the tools it catalogued are the most effective at imparting the various types of knowledge. Finally, the study provides a Soldier with an example self-development plan illustrating how the technology supported tools could be used over time to prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan.

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statement.)

ABSTRACT

TECNOLOGY SUPPORTED SELF-DEVELOPMENT FOR SOLDIERS DEPLOYING TO AFGHANISTAN, by Major John C. Lemay, 103 pages.

This study is a resource Soldiers can use to help prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan by creating a self-development plan using technology supported tools. First, the study identifies some types of knowledge technology supported tools can impart to Soldiers. Then the study catalogues specific types of technology supported tools including documentaries, movies, YouTube videos, iPhone applications, games, and language training software. Next, the study assesses which of the tools it catalogued are the most effective at imparting the various types of knowledge. Finally, the study provides a Soldier with an example self-development plan illustrating how the technology supported tools could be used over time to prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ACRONYMS

AR	Army Regulation
CMH	Center for Military History
CSA	Chief of Staff of the Army
DGDP	Directorate of Graduate Degree Programs
DLI	Defense Language Institute
DLIFLC	Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center
FM	Field Manual
GDP	Graduate Degree Programs
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
SGA	Small Group Advisor
USJFCOM	United States Joint Forces Command

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study is intended to be a resource Soldiers can use to create a self-development plan in preparation for a deployment to Afghanistan. It catalogs numerous self-development tools and provides an example self-development plan. This study focuses on technology supported self-development tools. Technology supported self-development tools are important because they have tremendous potential but little formal use by the military. For example, today reading lists are the most prominent resource for guiding military self-development. Indeed, the United States Joint Forces Command's (USJFCOM) Afghanistan Pre-Deployment Reading List is an excellent self-development plan for Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan. Yet many Soldiers struggle to devote enough off duty time to complete the USJFCOM reading list. One of the reasons for this is that reading may not hold a Soldier's interest, that is, it may not fit a Soldier's learning style well. This is not necessarily a problem since technology has introduced countless other tools for self-development. These technology supported self-development tools include documentaries, movies, YouTube videos, iPhone applications, language training programs and games. The challenge every Soldier faces is sorting through all these possibilities to produce a self-development strategy that is effective for their individual learning style. This study is important because it assists Soldiers by cataloging relevant tools in one location (much like a reading list), assesses which tools are the most useful, and demonstrates how they can be combined in a comprehensive self-development plan.

<u>Background</u>

When a Soldier thinks of professional development, his mind turns towards reading. There is good reason for this. Many of the great captains advocate for reading, such as Napoleon who stated "Read over and over again the campaigns of Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar, Gustavus, Turenne, Eugene and Frederic. . . .This is the only way to become a great general and master the secrets of the art of war."[1] Today's American military heartily endorses Napoleon's sentiment, as evidenced by the proliferation of military reading lists. The Chief of Staff of the Army has one, as does every Service Chief, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Representative Ike Skelton (former Chairman of the House Armed Service Committee), the Joint Forces Command, the Army and Marine Corps Counter Insurgency Center, the War Colleges, the Staff Colleges, indeed, almost every US military organization has a reading list.

But is reading the most effective way to pursue self-development? Certainly in Napoleon's era it was; there were few alternatives. That is not the case today, as demonstrated by the two experiences that prompted my interest in the subject. The first is that I started working through USJFCOM's Afghanistan reading list by listening to the books on my iPhone while I drove to work. The second was a bit more surprising. I have had a Netflix subscription for a few years, and recently bought an Xbox 360. I discovered that there are thousands of films and TV shows I can watch 'on demand' through my Netflix subscription on my Xbox, including a PBS Frontline special on Afghanistan.

<u>Research Question</u>

The question that this study endeavors to answer is: How can a Soldier create an effective self-development plan that will prepare him for a deployment to Afghanistan

using technology supported tools? The secondary questions that must be answered in order to answer the primary question are:

1. What types of knowledge does a Soldier need to learn in order to prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan?

2. What technology supported self-development tools are available that will impart the types of knowledge a Soldier needs for a deployment to Afghanistan?

3. Which of the tools are the most effective at imparting the knowledge?

<u>Assumptions</u>

This study assumes that Soldiers will commit personal time to self-development in preparation for a tour of duty in Afghanistan. This is a significant assumption because self-development, as defined by the Army, takes place during a Soldier's personal time and therefore directly competes with family time, hobbies, and relaxation.

This study also assumes that the USJFCOM Afghanistan Pre-deployment Reading List is a good model for a self-development plan for a Soldier deploying to Afghanistan. USJFCOM uses a six month time frame for a self-development plan and this study will mimic that model.

Finally, this study assumes that Soldiers have access to the various technological devices necessary to use a technology supported self-development tool. This is also a significant assumption because, as an example, not every Soldier owns an iPhone, yet this study investigates iPhone applications.

<u>Definitions</u>

     <u>Self-development plan</u>: A strategy for using various self-development tools over time.

     <u>Self-development Training Domain</u>: "The *self-development training domain* includes planned, goal-oriented learning that reinforces and expands the depth and breadth of an individual's knowledge base, self- awareness, and situational awareness; complements institutional and operational learning; enhances professional competence; and meets personal objectives."[2]

     <u>Technology Supported Tool</u>: A tool that needs modern technology, such as a television, a computer, or the Internet, to function. An example is the movie *Glory* or a specific Internet website.

     <u>Tool</u>: A discrete resource for self-development such as the book *Flashman*.

<u>Scope and Delimitations</u>

     Since every self-development program is individualized, the possible self-development tools and plans are numerous and varied. Thus while this study is intended to be a resource all Soldiers can use to build their own plans, it focuses on a Soldier deploying to Afghanistan in order to limit its scope. However, it should still be of interest to all Soldiers, for while it cannot catalog every potential self-development tool, the types of tools and approach taken can still provide inspiration. This study is intended to be accessible to all Soldiers, so it does not focus on specific jobs (logisticians, infantrymen, etc) or ranks (senior non-commissioned officers, field grade officers, etc.). The study uses Afghanistan as its focus because the Afghanistan Theater has recently become the Army's main effort and many Soldiers will deploy there.

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This study further limits its scope by only focusing on specific types of technology supported tools. As stated above, the possible types of self-development tools are numerous and include books, audio books, podcasts, Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds, magazines, websites, blogs, distance learning programs, and computer games. This list just scratches the surface, and manages the vast amount of potential self-development tools available by only considering documentaries, movies, YouTube videos, iPhone applications, language training programs and games.

<center>Significance of Study</center>

Self-development is one of the three training domains that comprise the Army Training System and the Army believes that "to prepare for increasingly more demanding operational environments, Army leaders must invest more time on self-study and self-development than before."[3] Yet few resources, other than reading lists, exist to help Soldiers create a self-development plan. And reading, while important, is not effective for all learning styles and thus all Soldiers. This means that Soldiers discover most of their non-book self-development tools by accident resulting in self-development becoming haphazard. Further, the Army does not hold Soldiers accountable for self-development. Therefore many Soldiers only use self-development tools that are engaging or correspond with their individual learning styles. Finally, a plan for self-development is important because "The self-development domain includes planned, goal-oriented learning."[4] This study provides Soldiers with a resource they can use to create their own self-development plans. These self-development plans will correspond to the Soldier's learning style and thus the Soldier will find self-development more engaging and spend more time on self-development.

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Summary and Conclusions

This chapter, Chapter 1, "Introduction," outlined the study's purpose, to be a resource that enables Soldiers to develop effective technology supported self-development plans prior to deploying to Afghanistan. It went on to describe the research question of this study, some assumptions, definitions, and limited the scope of the study to specific technological tools: Documentaries, movies, YouTube videos, iPhone applications, language training programs and games. The next chapter, Chapter 2, "Research Methodology," will review the literature that pertains to this study. This literature includes self-development theory, Army Doctrine, Army Training Guidance, and popular military reading lists.

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[1]Richard Moore, *Napoleon on War*, 2006, http://www.napoleonguide.com/ maxim_war.htm (accessed 17 October 2009).

[2]Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 7-0, *Training for Full Spectrum Opertaions* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Officer, 2008), 3-9.

[3]Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership-Competent, Confident, and Agile* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 8-6.

[4]Headquarters, Department of the Army, FM 7-0, *Training for Full Spectrum Opertaions,* 3-9.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study is to provide Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan with a resource to create their own self development plans by cataloging and evaluating some of the potential tools and providing an example plan. Chapter 1, "Introduction," outlined the study's purpose, described the research question of this study, some assumptions, definitions, and limited the scope of the study to specific technological tools: Documentaries, movies, YouTube videos, iPhone applications, language training programs and games. This chapter, Chapter 2, "Literature Review", will review the literature that pertains to this study and is divided into four sections. The first section briefly discusses literature about learning and self-development while the second describes US Army Doctrine on self-development. The third section addresses US Army Training Guidance. Finally, the forth section highlights some of the most popular military reading lists.

Literature about Learning and Self-development

Suppose you and your friend Harry are in an American history class, studying the events that led up to World War I. Films and tapes of speeches about the period are in the school library. Since you love movies, you might get more out of watching the films. Since Harry prefers listening, he might get more out of listening to speeches. If you were to just listen to the speeches and Harry were to watch the films, neither of you would fully understand what you're studying.[1]

There are numerous theories on learning styles including Brain Dominance, the Canfield Learning Styles, Dunn and Dunn Styles, 4MAT, Grasha-Riechmann Learning Styles, Kolb Learning Styles, and Multiple Intelligences.[2] It is beyond the scope of this paper to comprehensively examine all these theories. However, it is important to

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understand that different approaches to learning are more effective for different people. Thus a generic self-development plan should use multiple approaches because a self-development plan that uses only one approach, such as a reading list, may be entirely ineffective for some individuals. To provide some insight Dr. Gregorc and Gail Wood's theories are briefly described below.

The Gregorc Model postulates that learning styles are determined by the combination of our perception and ordering. Perception is how we view our world and ordering is how we use the information.[3] Every person has concrete and abstract perceptual abilities, and uses both, but one is generally stronger. Concrete perceptual abilities entail taking in information through the five senses, while abstract skills provide the ability to understand what one can't see.[4] People order the information sequentially or randomly. Sequential people follow a logical train of thought while random people 'jump right in.'[5] The four possible combinations of these traits determines one's learning style: Concrete Sequential, Abstract Sequential, Abstract Random, or Concrete Random. People whose learning style is Concrete Sequential learn by working systematically and paying attention to details. Those whose style is Abstract Sequential learn by watching and prefer having a teacher. Abstract Random learn by participating and social interaction. Finally, Concrete Random individuals learn through experimentation and real-life experiences.[6]

Gail Wood, author of *How to Study: Use Your Personal Learning Style to Help You Succeed When It Counts*, writes that there are five learning styles. Visual learners use their eyes, auditory learners use their ears, sequential learners need to put things in a particular order to learn, global learners need to see the whole picture to learn, and

kinesthetic learners learn through doing and motion.[7] Every person has their own combination of these learning styles and will learn more from activities that correspond to their learning strengths. Visual learners benefit from movies and highlighting when reading, auditory learners through audio books and making tape recorded notes, sequential learners by making outlines or timelines, global learners by describing their mental picture into a tape recorder, and kinesthetic learners by using a computer or listening to audio books while walking.[8]

While only two examples of the numerous learning style models are explored here, the key point is that people learn differently. On that both Gregorc and Wood agree. The implication for a generic self-development strategy is that it should combine multiple approaches to appeal to different learning styles. A further implication is that while reading certainly has value, so do other activities, including the categories of technology supported tools examined in this study.

<u>US Army Doctrine</u>

The Army's keystone doctrine for self-development is Field Manual (FM) 7-0, *Training for Full Spectrum Operations*. This is not intuitive because many people think of self-development in terms of life-long learning, which seems more closely related to education than training. However, "The Army Training System comprises training and education. . . . Training and education occur in all three training domains. Training prepares individuals for certainty. Education prepares individuals for uncertainty. Education enables agility, judgment, and creativity. Training enables action."[9] The Army's three training domains are institutional, operational, and self-development. FM 7-0 asserts that self-development is equally important to the other training domains, but

that the onus is on Soldiers to pursue self development and professional growth.[10] FM 7-0

gives the following examples of self development: "reading Army and joint manuals,

professional journals, and military history; taking college courses; completing self-paced

online training modules or pursuing academic degrees."[11]

While FM 7-0 is the keystone document for training, and self-development is one

of the Army's three training domains, FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*, explores self-

development in depth. The Army's "Leadership Requirements Model," shown in Figure

1, focuses on two areas, "attributes and core leader competencies". The core leader

competencies are further divided into "leads, develops, and achieves." Develops contains

"creates a positive environment, develops others, and *prepares self*."[12]

Figure 1.   Leadership Requirements Model
Source: Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership-Competent, Confident, and Agile* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 2-4.

So in addition to being one of the three training domains, self-development, or "prepares self," is one of the eight core leader competencies. The eight core leader competencies are depicted in figure 2. Prepares self has three supporting behaviors: be prepared for expected and unexpected challenges; expand knowledge; and maintain self-awareness.[13] Being prepared for expected and unexpected challenges involves improving both fitness and intelligence. An "Army leader's intelligence include[s] agility, judgment, innovation, interpersonal tact, and domain knowledge"[14] and thus can be improved by strengthening those components. Expanding knowledge is simply acquiring new

knowledge. Self-awareness is "being aware of oneself, including one's traits, feelings, and behaviors."[15]

	Leads Others	Extends Influence Beyond the Chain of Command	Leads by Example	Communicates
Leads	· Provide purpose, motivation, inspiration. · Enforce standards. · Balance mission and welfare of Soldiers.	· Build trust outside lines of authority. · Understand sphere, means, and limits of influence. · Negotiate, build consensus, resolve conflict.	· Display character. · Lead with confidence in adverse conditions. · Demonstrate competence.	· Listen actively. · State goals for action. · Ensure shared understanding.
	Creates a Positive Environment	Prepares Self	Develops Leaders	
Develops	· Set the conditions for positive climate. · Build teamwork and cohesion. · Encourage initiative. · Demonstrate care for people.	· Be prepared for expected and unexpected challenges. · Expand knowledge. · Maintain self-awareness.	· Assess developmental needs. Develop on the job. · Support professional and personal growth. · Help people learn. · Counsel, coach, and mentor. · Build team skills and processes.	
	Gets Results			
Achieves	· Provide direction, guidance, and priorities. · Develop and execute plans. · Accomplish tasks consistently.			

Figure 2.   Eight Core Leader Competencies and Supporting Behaviors
Source: Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership - Competent, Confident, and Agile* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 2-7.

It is important to note that the three supporting behaviors are *behaviors*. Separate from those behaviors, each of the eight core leader competencies has associated components and actions. The components and actions for prepares self are shown in figure 3.

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Prepares Self	
Leaders ensure they are prepared to execute their leadership responsibilities fully. They are aware of their limitations and strengths and seek to develop themselves. Leaders maintain physical fitness and mental well-being. They continue to improve the domain knowledge required of their leadership roles and their profession. Only through continuous preparation for missions and other challenges, being aware of self and situations and practicing lifelong learning and development can an individual fulfill the responsibilities of leadership.	
Maintains mental and physical health and well-being	• Recognizes imbalance or inappropriateness of one's own actions. • Removes emotions from decision making. • Applies logic and reason to make decisions or when interacting with emotionally charged individuals. • Recognizes the sources of stress and maintains appropriate levels of challenge to motivate self. • Takes part in regular exercise, leisure activities, and time away from routine work. • Stays focused on life priorities and values.
Maintains self awareness: employs self understanding, and recognizes impact on others	• Evaluates one's strengths and weaknesses. • Learns from mistakes and makes corrections, learns from experience. • Considers feedback on performance, outcomes associated with actions, and actions taken by others to achieve similar goals. • Seeks feedback on how others view one's own actions. • Routinely determines personal goals and makes progress toward them. • Develops capabilities where possible but accepts personal limitations. • Seeks opportunities where capabilities can be used appropriately. • Understands self-motivation under various task conditions.
Evaluates and incorporates feedback from others	• Determines areas in need of development. • Judges self with the help of feedback from others.
Expands knowledge of technical, technological, and tactical areas	• Keeps informed about developments and policy changes inside and outside the organization. • Seeks knowledge of systems, equipment, capabilities, and situations, particularly information technology systems.
Expands conceptual and interpersonal capabilities	• Understands the contribution of concentration, critical thinking (assimilation of information, discriminating relevant cues, question asking), imagination (decentering), and problem solving in different task conditions. • Learns new approaches to problem solving. • Applies lessons learned. • Filters unnecessary information efficiently. • Reserves time for self-development, reflection, and personal growth. • Considers possible motives behind conflicting information.
Analyzes and organizes information to create knowledge	• Reflects on what has been learned and organizes these insights for future application. • Considers source, quality or relevance, and criticality of information to improve understanding. • Identifies reliable sources of data and other resources related to acquiring knowledge. • Sets up systems or procedures to store knowledge for reuse.
Maintains relevant cultural awareness	• Learns about issues of language, values, customary behavior, ideas, beliefs, and patterns of thinking that influence others. • Learns about results of previous encounters when culture plays a role in mission success.
Maintains relevant geopolitical awareness	• Learns about relevant societies outside the United States experiencing unrest. • Recognizes Army influences on other countries, multinational partners, and enemies. • Understands the factors influencing conflict and peacekeeping, peace enforcing, and peacemaking missions.

Figure 3.   Competency of Prepares Self and Associated Components and Actions
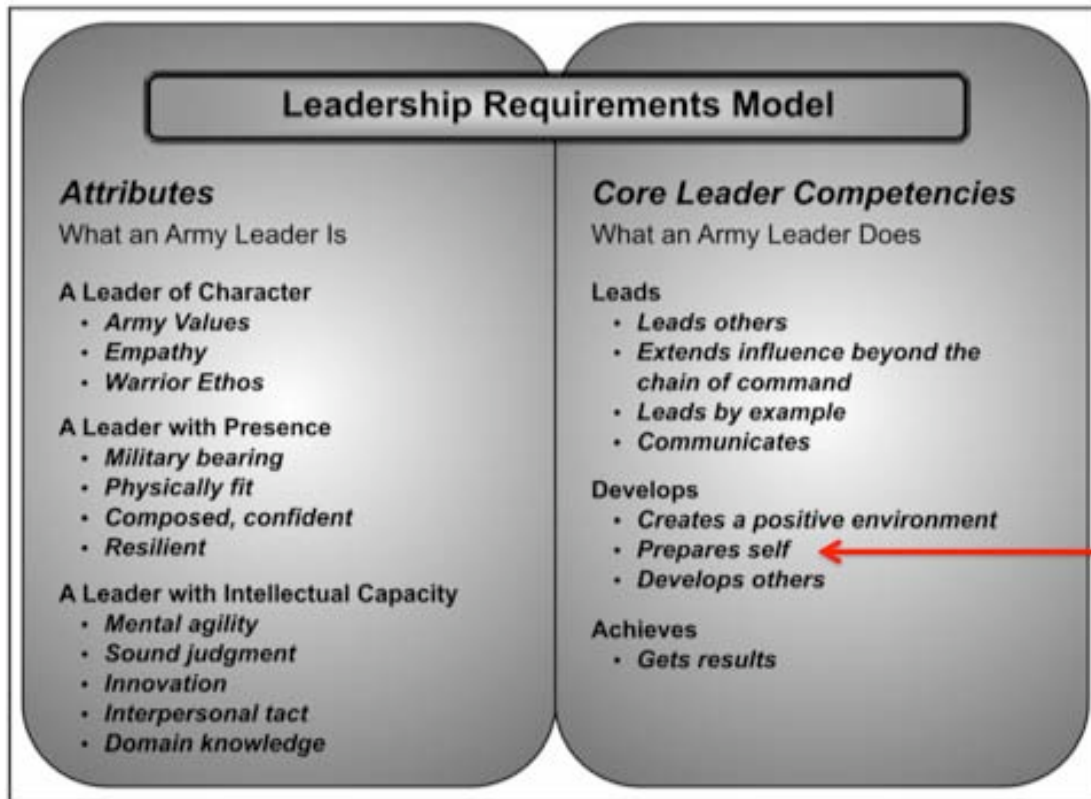Source: Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership - Competent, Confident, and Agile* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2006), A-7.

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The implication of Army Doctrine on self-development is that the Army values self-development. It is one of three training domains in the Army Training System and there are two field manuals that stress the importance of self-development.

Training Guidance

Army Regulation (AR) 350-1, *Army Training and Leader Development*, is the Army's authoritative guidance on training and provides extensive guidance on self-development. It establishes the Army Training and Leader Development Model, which consists of three separate, but overlapping training domains--operational, institutional, and self-development.[16] Self-development is further categorized as structured, guided, or personal. The Army requires structured self-development, while guided self-development is optional but recommended and personal self-development is self-initiated.[17] AR 350-1 defines the purposes of self-development as "(1) Assist individuals with their current assignment and prepare them for future assignments. (2) Bridge the gaps between the operational and institutional domains. (3) Set the conditions for continuous learning and growth."[18] While the importance of self-development is clearly stated, AR 350-1 makes it clear that "Soldiers will accomplish self-development training on their own time."[19]

AR 350-1 directs a number of Army programs including combatives, cultural training and language training. No self-development component is described in the combatives program; however, the regulation stresses the importance of combatives training stating, "Soldiers must be willing and able to fight when called upon. Every Soldier should experience the physical and emotional demands of hand-to-hand fighting prior to engaging in combat."[20] Unlike combatives, AR 350-1 does describe a self-development component for both culture and language training. First, though, the

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regulation describes how the Army trains both cultural capability and language proficiency. They are considered separate by interrelated and cultural capability is the Army's priority.[21] Cultural capability is defined as "a blend of cross-cultural and regional competencies that allows a Soldier to help forecast and favorably influence the behavior of a target group or society."[22] For cultural training, the regulation prescribes that units must have a culture reading list, units must make culture self-development tools available to Soldiers, and units should encourage Soldiers to take advantage of distance learning.[23] For language the regulation only prescribes that each unit has a language reading list and informs Soldiers that the Army makes on-line language instruction available.[24] AR 350-1 stresses the important of culture and language training stating "The human dimension that the Army must operate in as part of today's complex environments necessitates that Soldiers at all levels possess some cultural awareness and foreign language capability."[25] Finally AR 350-1 mentions gaming and emphasizes that games provide effective training solutions to support self-development training.[26]

While the Army's AR 350-1 applies to all Soldiers globally and is thus generic, General Stanley McChrystal, commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), has produced specific training guidance for Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan. The ISAF COIN Training Guidance does not specifically address self-development, however, the training it addresses applies to all three Army training domains, including self-development. The ISAF training guidance begins by stating its purpose is to focus limited training time, develop the "Strategic Corporal" and that the guidance applies to every Soldier.[27] The guidance emphasizes that Afghanistan is a "complex environment for which the most effective asset we have is a thinking, well-trained Soldier."[28] The

guidance outlines 17 key points including "Language Training" and "You must

understand your Operational Environment."[29] Under language training the ISAF COIN

Training Guidance emphasizes that all Soldiers must learn basic language skills stating,

"This language skill is as important as your other basic combat skills."[30] Under

operational environment[31] the guidance stresses the importance of knowing the human

terrain, understanding familial, clan, and tribal cultures, and understanding the viewpoint

of the population and insurgent.

The implication of this training guidance is that Soldiers must thoroughly train for

a deployment to Afghanistan and self-development is an appropriate training domain to

address an upcoming operational deployment. Further, the training guidance suggests

some specific areas to focus on: Language, culture, and counterinsurgency.

Reading Lists

Chief of Staff of the Army's Reading List

General (retired) Schoomaker, the former Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA),

approved the current Chief of Staff of the Army's Reading List (CSA's reading list).

General Casey, the current CSA, has not yet published a professional reading list. The

purpose of the CSA's reading list is to improve "understanding of [the] Army's history,

the global strategic context, and the enduring lessons of war."[32] The CSA's reading list is

divided into four sublists, each targeted to a specific level of responsibility. The sublists

are designed to be progressive, complement the Army's formal education, and be read as

independent study.[33] In a broad sense the CSA's reading list addresses some of the

doctrinal components of prepares self such as expands conceptual and interpersonal

capabilities, maintains relevant cultural awareness, and maintains relevant geopolitical

awareness. However, of 47 items to read, only *Inside al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* addresses Afghanistan. The CSA's reading list is available on the United States Army Center for Military History's (CMH) website as a pdf file. However, it is hard to find because the CMH website prominently displays the CMH reading list, not the CSA's. To find the CSA's reading list go to the webpage *CMH Publications Catalog*[34] and you will find it listed alphabetically under Chief of Staff's Professional Reading List. It publication number is CMH Pub 105-1-1.

<div align="center">

The United States Army Center of Military
History Professional Reading List

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The CMH reading list, presented in an identical format to the CSA's reading list, has the same broad goals. CMH's list is more recent, including a number of books published from 2007 to 2008. CMH published its own list because it believed there was a need for something more current than General (Ret.) Schoomaker's while the Army awaits the current CSA, General Casey, to approve his.[35] The CMH list certainly contains the components of self-development, and although it has more works on recent operations and counter-insurgency than the CSA's reading list, it does not contain any books on Afghanistan. The reading list is located on the website *U.S. Army Center of Military History Recommended Professional Reading List*.[36]

<div align="center">

The Marine Corps Professional Reading Program

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The core program is organized with about ten books and one doctrinal publication per rank. However, many supplemental books are listed by function, world region, and topic. The website includes discussion guides on some of the books, an article on leading a book discussion and an article on the importance of reading. The counterinsurgency

reading list is tailored for Marines deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan. It is divided into two sections, one for majors and lieutenant colonels containing fifteen books and articles, the other for company grade officers, senior non commissioned officers and junior enlisted containing ten books. The program is not focused on Afghanistan. The utility increases if one focuses on the Afghanistan portion of the counterinsurgency reading list. The Marine Corps Professional Reading Program can be found at the *Professional Programs Branch*[37] web page of the Marine Corps University. You can also contact the branch head, USMC reading program at 703-784-6850.

<center>USJFCOM Pre-deployment Afghanistan Reading List</center>

The United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) breaks down its reading list by three levels. The first, tactical, is for E1-E3 and consists of a 20 week program covering twelve articles and books at a recommended pace of 75 pages a week. The second, small unit leaders, is for E4-E6 and O1-O3 and consists of sixteen articles and books over 26 weeks at a recommended pace of 125 pages a week. The final, operational/strategic planners is for E7-E9 and O4-O6 and also covers sixteen articles and books over 26 weeks, but at a pace of 200 pages a week. Each list contains recommendations for additional readings.[38] The majority of the list deals directly with Afghanistan and is relevant to the following self-development components: Expands knowledge of technical, technological, and tactical areas; expands conceptual and interpersonal capabilities; maintains relevant cultural awareness; and maintains relevant geopolitical awareness. The list is available at the *US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center*[39] website. Further, the list links each book or article to a free download or the Amazon.com web page for purchase.

Australian Chief of Army's Reading List

This 84-page guide is the official reading list for the Australian Army. It is designed to "help soldiers of all ranks think about the profession of arms of which they are members."[40] After a brief preface and introduction, the reading list contains an 18 page essay on *The Study of Military History* by Colonel E. G. Keogh that was first published in 1965. Colonel Keogh encourages Soldiers to think of the study of military history as the study of military experience, describes a method for studying military history, and stresses the importance of including historical fiction and war novels in a reading program. He states that the merit of historical fiction and novels "lies in the fact that they do not require hard study, they are truly recreational. Nevertheless every one you read adds a little more to your knowledge of war."[41] The reading list is then organized by rank from soldier to senior officers and concludes with a separate section on topical titles and Australian Army History. Each of the rank sections is divided between non-fiction and fiction recommendations. While the list contains many books on counterinsurgency, irregular warfare, and Iraq, not a single book in the list addresses Afghanistan exclusively. The list is also titled Study Paper 313 and can be downloaded from the *Land Warfare Studies Centre Study Papers*[42] webpage.

The Australian Army Counterinsurgency and
Small Wars Reading Guide

This 30-page reading guide begins with a forward by Lieutenant General Gillespie, Chief of the Australian Army, who states, "Every officer and soldier in our Army has a professional obligation to commit to constant learning and up-skilling to meet new circumstances. Reading guides such as this are but the start. Every one of us

must constantly evaluate our experiences against history and doctrine and be prepared to challenge conventional wisdom."[43] The reading list contains books and articles divided into sections entitled Insurgent and counterinsurgent theory and doctrine, General histories of insurgency and counterinsurgency, Historical case studies, and Contemporary counterinsurgency. The contemporary counterinsurgency list contains an Afghanistan section that lists five books and articles. The list does not describe its recommended books and articles but does provide basic bibliographic information. The entire list is relevant in a general sense, but only one half of thirty pages deals directly with Afghanistan. The list is also known as Working Paper 135 and available on the Australian Army's *Land Warfare Studies Centre Working Papers*[44] website. The list is so large that it is clearly meant as a reference to help soldiers select some books and articles to read. The inclusion of shorter articles makes it easier for soldiers to digest.

<div align="center">Summary and Conclusions</div>

This chapter, Chapter 2, "Literature Review," reviewed literature about learning and self-development, Army Doctrine on self-development, Army Training Guidance, and popular military reading lists. The literature on learning styles showed that people learn differently and therefore technology assisted self-development tools may be more effective for some Soldiers than reading. The literature on doctrine and training guidance shows that the Army considers self-development to be very important, but expects Soldiers to conduct it on their own initiative. A review of the various military reading lists, the primary self-development tool available to Soldiers today, showed that only one, USJFCOM's, contained substantial material on Afghanistan. The next chapter, Chapter 3, "Research Methodology," will describe how this study will find the technology supported

self-development tools, how the study will evaluate them, and finally how the study will

combine them into a cohesive example self-development plan for Soldiers deploying to

Afghanistan.

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[13]Ibid., 2-7.

[14]Ibid., 8-7.

[15]Ibid., 8-8.

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[17]Ibid., 5.

[18]Ibid., 6.

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[22]Ibid., 122.

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[25]Ibid., 121.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to provide Soldiers with a resource to create their

own self-development plans in preparation for a deployment to Afghanistan. The

previous chapter, Chapter 2, "Literature Review," reviewed literature about learning and

self-development, Army Doctrine on self-development, Army Training Guidance, and

popular military reading lists. It found that there is currently very little assistance to help

Soldiers develop self-development plans using technology supported tools. This chapter,

Chapter 3, "Research Methodology," describes how this study attempts to fill that gap by

finding technology supported self-development tools, evaluating those tools, and creating

an example self-development plan using those tools.

Finding the Tools

There are an almost unlimited number of potential tools. That made finding them

a daunting task. However, through the initial literature review four primary methods of

finding tools for self-development became apparent. Those methods are the capturing of

operational experiences of Soldiers, consulting experts, using academic research

methods, and exploring the Internet.

Capturing the Operational Experience of Soldiers

Approach

The United States Army has been conducting operations in Afghanistan since

2002. During this time hundreds of thousands of Soldiers have prepared for operations in

Afghanistan, conducted operations in Afghanistan, and then returned and reflected on

how they could have better prepared. They have a wealth of insights on how to prepare

other Soldiers for service in Afghanistan. This study attempted to gather those insights by

creating a blog on the topic of self-development for Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan.

The blog contains the study's ideas and allows Soldiers the opportunity to post their

ideas.

Results

No Soldier participated in the study's blog resulting in few operational

experiences informing the study. Although the blog has merit, it was not implemented

successfully in this study. One of the reasons was technical. The author used iWeb to

create the blog, *Self Development for Soldiers Deploying to Afghanistan*,[1] but iWeb is an

Apple product designed to work well with Safari. At least one individual, Mr. Nocks,

tried to post to the blog from a government computer using Microsoft programs and was

not able to do so. The second technical reason is that the blog was hosted by Apple's

server at 'me.com' and cannot be found through Internet searches. A Google search on

self-development and Afghanistan quickly returned the blog site *A.L.L. = Afghan Lessons

Learned for Soldiers,*[2] a blog for Soldiers preparing to deploy to Afghanistan that has a

large following, but not the study's blog. The study's blog could still be a useful tool.

Most Soldiers will not read a thesis, and since this thesis is designed to help Soldiers it

eventually needs to be transferred into a medium that they will access. The Army

Training Network or blogspot.com might be more effective ways to implement the blog.

Consulting Experts

Approach

There are numerous experts on training, self-development, and Afghanistan located on Fort Leavenworth or accessible through modern communications. Some possibilities include the Army Training Network, the Foreign Military Studies Office, and the Center for Army Leadership. The study consulted these experts through both email and office calls.

Results

Consulting with experts produced some very useful insights. Sandra Wagner, an education specialist with the Defense Language Institute (DLI) provided the report *Foreign Language, And Cultural Learning Resources Available to the U.S. Military*.[3] Sayed Pacha, a DLI instructor teaching Dari at the Command and General Staff College, provided insights into Afghanistan's languages and culture, as well as in depth instruction in *Headstart* and recommended the film *Inside Islam*. Dr. Richard Steward, Chief Historian, U.S. Army Center for Military History provided a detailed response but one that did not further the studies efforts. Dr. Steward stated

> Part of the answer is we can think of very few movies, games, or websites that are historically accurate enough to recommend without detailed warnings. We look at things through historians' eyes and are thus focused on accuracy, objectivity, details, and subtlety, and few movies, games, or websites, no matter how entertaining, fit that standard. As historians we are (I think constitutionally!) old fashioned and still believe that focused and thoughtful reading of books that are accurate, deep, and nuanced, will improve the mind and prepare it, progressively and sequentially, for higher responsibilities. We have found no short-cut or painless path to gaining this knowledge. A serious profession (with serious consequences to each action and decision) demands serious preparation and hard work. Anything less gets soldiers killed.[4]

Mr. William Brosnan from the Army Training Network was not aware of any efforts that would be immediately useful to this study. Mr. Brosnan discussed the possibility of incorporating this study into the Army Training Network once it was finished. Ms. Melisa Kersey, an analyst in the Human Terrain Program, provided numerous materials on Afghanistan culture and suggested various books and documentaries. Mr. Lester Grau, a noted Afghanistan expert from the Foreign Military Studies Office, recommended a couple of movies but caveated "the best movies are in Russian."[5] Dr. Jon Fallesen, from the Center for Army Leadership, answered questions about self-development and provided survey results. However, the survey results were "For Official Use Only" and did not directly apply to this study, so they were not used.[6]

Academic Methods

<u>Approach</u>

Academia has numerous resources for conducting research. For example, the University of Nebraska at Omaha has an extensive Afghanistan collection. Also, the Videohound Golden Movie Retriever available through "mylibraries" on Army Knowledge Online is a potential tool for researching movies and documentaries.

<u>Results</u>

Dr. Shaista Wahab, the Arthur Paul Afghanistan Collection Librarian, provided a list of around forty documentaries on Afghanistan contained in the University of Nebraska at Omaha's collection. Most are not readily available to Soldiers, but the list was a useful reference for the study. The Videohound Golden Movie Retriever suggested nine movies about Afghanistan. Michael Browne from the Combined Arms Research

Library suggested seven tools on Afghanistan Culture, but they were all books.[7] Brad

Cox, Military Analyst at the Center for Army Lessons Learned, answered a Request for

Information with 35 unclassified documents on Afghanistan.[8] However, none of the

documents were technology supported tools and thus were of little use to the study.

Exploring the Internet

<u>Approach</u>

Some of the newer technology tools available for self-development can be found

through Internet research. Examples include movies posted on YouTube. However, there

is no way, even for official YouTube clips posted by the International Security Assistance

Force (ISAF), to find these tools other than exploring web pages and conducting internet

searches. Therefore this study used Google to conduct Internet searches as well as

conducted focused searches on relevant web sites such as the ISAF and YouTube web

sites.

<u>Results</u>

Internet searches yield numerous tools. All the iPhone applications were found by

searching the Apple Store, most of the YouTube videos were found searching YouTube,

and even some of the documentaries were found through searches on Netflix.

Criteria

Every tool that was examined was cataloged according to its basic information

and then evaluated by specific criteria. Basic information includes the tool's name, type,

and author. The criteria are utility, accessibility, and interest and are defined below.

While the study considered evaluations from sources such as book and movie reviews, in

the end this study's evaluation of the criteria is subjective. Therefore each criterion was simply evaluated as low, medium, or high. In addition to the evaluation, the study provides specific details for each criterion.

Utility

Utility is a measure of how useful the tool is. A tool has utility if time invested in using the tool results in effective self-development training for a Soldier deploying to Afghanistan. Utility is important because the entire purpose of the self-development training domain is to increase a Soldier's competence. Utility was evaluated by considering the following factors. First, is this tool relevant to one of the components of self-development? Second, is it relevant to all Soldiers or just specific grades and specialties? Third, does the tool contain specific information on Afghanistan? And fourth, does it relate to specific Army training guidance such as Army Regulation 350-1 or the COMISAF/USFOR-A Counterinsurgency Training Guidance.

Accessibility

Accessibility is a measure of the ease with which a Soldier can find and use the tool. Accessibility is important because self-development most often occurs in a Soldier's living space. This might be in the barracks or in a private residence in a civilian community. Accessibility was evaluated by considering the following factors. First, can Soldiers easily use this tool in his home? For the purpose of this study, a classified, including a "For Official Use Only," tool is considered less accessible then an unclassified tool. Second, how much does this tool cost? Less cost means the tool is more accessible.

Interest

Interest is a measure of the probability of a Soldier actually spending his free time using the tool. Interest is important because the Army does not monitor or direct training in the self-development domain. Self-development is entirely the responsibility of the individual Soldier and competes with family time, hobbies, and sleep. Interest was evaluated using the following factors. First, is the tool engaging? A book that is a 'page turner' or a thrilling movie is engaging. Second, does the tool appeal to multiple learning styles? The more learning styles it appeals to the more likely Soldiers are to use it.

Create an Example Self-Development Plan

A self-development plan is only limited in duration and scope by the individual crafting it. However, this study used the United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) model for their Pre-deployment Afghanistan Reading List and build a six month or 24 week plan.[9] Unlike USJFCOM this study did not build three separate plans tailored to a Soldier's grade–each of which assumes a different reading level. Instead, it only recommends one plan and assume that each Soldier has three hours a week to devote to self-development. So the plan lits, by week, three hours of technology focused self-development for Afghanistan. Every Soldier's actual circumstances will vary. A Soldier may build a self-development plan five weeks before deploying and have only two hours a week available. Or a Soldier could spend five hours a week on self-development throughout his entire 12 month tour in Afghanistan.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter, Chapter 3, "Research Methodology," addressed three specific elements: finding the tools, evaluating those tools according to specific criteria, and creating an example self-development plan. To find the tools, the study attempted to access the operational experience of Soldiers, consulted with experts, used academic methods, and explored the Internet. Then the study evaluated the tools based on utility, accessibility, and interest. Finally, the study combined the tools into an example self-development plan modeled on the USJFCOM assumption of a six month time frame and further assumed that a Soldier has three hours a week to devote to self-development. The next chapter, Chapter 4, "Analysis," answers the study's secondary and primary research questions.

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[7] Michael J. Browne, Electronic correspondence with author, 17 November 2009.

[8] Brad Cox, Electronic correspondence with author, 9 December 2009.

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CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study is to provide Soldiers with a resource that will aid them
in creating their own self-development plans. The last chapter, Chapter 3, "Research
Methodology," addressed three specific elements: finding the tools, evaluating those tools
according to specific criteria, and creating an example self-development plan. This
chapter, Chapter 4, "Analysis," answers the three secondary research questions and then
the primary research question.

Secondary Research Question 1

The first secondary research question is: What types of knowledge does a Soldier
need to learn in order to prepare for a deployment to Afghanistan? The technology
supported tools this study explored can impart all types of knowledge but the literature
review drew out a number of topics that are vital for a Soldier deploying to Afghanistan.
These topics are language proficiency, cultural capacity, history, counterinsurgency, and
understanding the tactical environment.

Language Proficiency

Both the Army and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) emphasize the
importance of language proficiency for Soldiers. Army Regulation 350-1 states that
"Foreign language capability and cultural awareness are important to success in today's
complex operating environments. In addition to Soldiers with specialized skills, Soldiers
at all levels must possess some cultural awareness and foreign language capability."[1]
General McCrystal has a section entitled "Language Training" in his ISAF

counterinsurgency training guidance, which directs that all Soldiers must learn basic language skills, and every platoon must have one leader that speaks Dari at 0+.[2] This is a significant challenge because language is a highly perishable skill and Dari or Pashtu are particularly difficult to learn.

Cultural Capability

Similar to speaking the local language, understanding the local culture is a crucial requirement. The ISAF COIN Training Guidance has a section entitled "The People are the Prize" which emphasizes that every Soldier must understand the people of Afghanistan and respect their culture and religion.[3] The ISAF COIN Guidance also emphasizes cultural understanding and states, "We must know the people, their environment, and their aspirations."[4]

History

History is heavily emphasized in military reading lists and traditional military self-development plans. Indeed, General (ret.) Schoomaker stated "The Professional Reading List is a way for leaders at all levels to increase their understanding of our Army's history, the global strategic context, and the enduring lessons of war."[5] Certainly understanding Afghanistan's history is a key component to understanding the Afghan people, the strategic context of the current war, and some enduring lessons of fighting in Afghanistan.

Counterinsurgency

Soldiers headed to Afghanistan will be fighting in a counterinsurgency campaign. The ISAF COIN Guidance states, "Protecting the people is the mission. The conflict will

be won by persuading the population, not by destroying the enemy. ISAF will succeed when Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) earns the support of the people."[6] This is reinforced by the ISAF COIN Training Guidance, which emphasizes that Soldiers must understand the human terrain and view civil considerations from the eyes of the populace and the insurgent.[7]

Understanding the Tactical Environment

At the end of the day Soldiers are expected to fight and win and thus must understand the tactical environment they will be fighting in. The ISAF COIN Training Guidance has a section entitled "Master the Basics" which charges Soldiers to be experts in their military occupation specialty and the basic Soldier skills of shoot, move, communicate, and first aid.[8] It also includes a section entitled "Counter-IED training" and reminds Soldiers that IEDs account for 60 percent of coalition casualties in Afghanistan.[9] Understanding the enemy threat, which skills are needed to fight and win, the nature of the physical terrain, and the challenges other units face in Afghanistan will allow Soldiers to understand the tactical environment.

Secondary Research Question 2

The second secondary research question is: What technology supported self-development tools are available that will impart the types of knowledge a Soldier needs for a deployment to Afghanistan? This section catalogs potential technology supported self-development tools and is organized by the categories of documentaries, movies, YouTube videos, iPhone applications, language training programs and games. Each tool is cataloged in a small table that summarizes the tool. The table is followed by a

paragraph of relevant information. For ease of use, information pertaining to the other secondary research questions is contained in this portion. For example, each tool is evaluated according to the criteria utility, accessibility, and interest, which address secondary research question number 3. Further, within each category, the tools are listed from best to worst. The sample table shows how the information in each table is organized.

Table 1. Example		
Utility (Low, Medium, High)	Accessibility (Low, Medium, High)	Interest (Low, Medium, High)
Fact 1 about Utility	Fact 1 about Accessibility (Generally Cost)	Fact 1 about Interest (Generally length)
Fact 2 about Utility	Fact 2 about Accessibility (Type of media tool is on)	Fact 2 about Interest

Source: Created by author.

Documentaries

Table 2. PBS Frontline: Obama's War		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
Examines US COIN strategy in Afghanistan	Cost: $22.49 Amazon	60 minutes long
Discusses the importance of Pakistan	Instant streaming from PBS	Web site with additional information

Source: Martin Smith, and Marcela Gaviria, *Obama's War* (PBS, 2009).

This 5 January 2010 Frontline special covers the situation in Afghanistan. It contains interviews with General McChrystal, the US and NATO commander in Afghanistan, and covers issues such as the illicit trade, Pakistan, population focused counterinsurgency strategy, the Taliban strategy, the Government of Afghanistan, corruption, and the over all strategic importance of winning in Afghanistan. *Obama's War* is similar to the *War Briefing*, but more current by a year. It can be watched online at the website *Frontline: Obama's War.*[10] The webpage has additional resources including transcripts of interviews with key individuals such as General McChrystal. Some possible issues for a Soldier to consider as he watches this video include:

1. What are the characteristics of a good counterinsurgency strategy?

2. What is the Taliban's strategy?

3. How does the Taliban relate with the people of Afghanistan?

4. How does the campaign in Afghanistan relate to the global terrorist threat?

5. How are stability in Pakistan and Afghanistan related?

Table 3. PBS Frontline: The War Briefing		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
Afghanistan war overview	Cost: $22.49 Amazon	60 minutes long
Tactical through strategic	Instant streaming from PBS and Netflix	Web site with additional information

Source: Marcela Gaviria, and Martin Smith, *The War Briefing* (PBS, 2008).

The 28 October 2008 Frontline special covers the situation in Afghanistan facing the incoming President of the United States. It is 60 minutes long and can be watched on the Internet at the PBS website *Frontline: The War Briefing*.[11] It is also available on Netflix and can be streamed to your TV via your Xbox if you have Netflix set up. The War Briefing weaves footage of a combat outpost in the Korengal River Valley with coverage of larger issues, such as the number of troops required, an overview of the Taliban, the role of opium in the conflict, the Government of Afghanistan's weakness, and Pakistan's role in the conflict. Soldiers can consider the same questions from Obama's War in this documentary. Additional questions Soldiers could consider as they view this film are:

1. How do you deal with an illusive enemy? Is there an alternative for closing with the enemy to firepower?

2. How should you confront corruption in Afghan society?

3. What actions do you take if you encounter Afghans growing poppy?

Table 4. Inside Islam		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest Medium
Overview of Islamic history	Cost: $18.49 DVD Amazon	100 minutes long
Overview of Islamic beliefs	YouTube Google Videos	Factual and dry

Source: Douglas Brooks West, *Inside Islam* (The History Channel, 2003).

This documentary gives a brief historical overview of Islam, interlaced with the theme 'not all Muslims are enemies of the west.' It begins with the very basics–that Islam means "submission" and a Muslim is "one who submits to god."[12] Then it overviews the difference between Sunni and Shia Muslims, the connection between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; the story of Muhammad; the five pillars of Islam; the role of women; Wahhabism; and Jihad. The video can be watched on YouTube webpage *The History Channel "Inside Islam" 1/9*.[13] Understanding Islam is an important component of understanding Afghan culture and this is film is recommended for all Soldiers. Some questions Soldiers may consider while watching it include:

1. What are the principle beliefs of Islam?

2. How did Islam originate and spread?

3. How can you show respect to Muslims without compromising your personal beliefs?

4. What is the relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam?

Table 5. Rethink Afghanistan		
Utility Medium	Accessibility High	Interest High
Addresses serious issues well	Cost: $17.99 Amazon or $25 for two at the BNF website	62 minutes long
Anti war propaganda spin	Instant streaming from the BNF website	Controversial

Source: Robert Greenwald, *Rethink Afghanistan* (Brave New Foundation, 2009).

Rethink Afghanistan includes interviews with academia, Taliban, retired Russian military officials, and Afghan government officials. It can be watched for free online at the Brave New Foundation webpage *Rethink Afghanistan War: Videos*.[14] It is broken into six different parts that are:

Part 1: What will military escalation in Afghanistan do?

Part 2: The War in Afghanistan can destabilize Pakistan.

Part 3: Costs of the war.

Part 4: Civilian casualties caused by US airstrikes.

Part 5: Can war liberate Afghan women?

Part 6: Three ex-CIA agents argue victory is not possible.[15]

Rethink Afghanistan has a clear political objective: America should withdrawal from Afghanistan. And while this theme certainly prevents Greenwald's documentary from being objective, it is still an excellent work. In addition to the typical security experts, the documentary contains interviews with retired Russian officers and Afghans. Further, the DVD contains a number of additional interviews that are worth watching. Some questions Soldiers could consider while watching this are:

1. What are the consequences of collateral damage in counterinsurgency?

2. Can you accomplish your mission with limited firepower?

3. What are reasonable risks to take to avoid collateral damage?

4. What can you do to contain the financial cost of the war?

Table 6.	PBS Frontline: Behind Taliban Lines	
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
Footage of an insurgent patrol	Cost: $24.99	39 minutes long
Interviews with insurgents	Instant streaming from PBS	Web site with additional information

Source: Jamie Doran, *Behind Taliban Lines* (PBS, 2010).

This 2010 Documentary chronicles Najibullah Quraishi's ten day long stay with the Hizb-i-Islami insurgents in Northern Afghanistan. The footage shows insurgents training daily, controlling the local territory and collecting taxes. Of particular note is footage of an actual insurgent patrol preparing to conduct an ambush. The insurgents demonstrate poor tactical skills and the particular mission fails but the documentary closes with a recap of some of the insurgent successes. The documentary includes a number of interviews with insurgents where they explain that they are fighting to prevent America from "getting rid of our Islamic and cultural values."[16] *Behind Taliban Lines* aired with *Pakistan: The Lost Generation*, which comprised about 20 minutes of the hour-long PBS special. PBS also has a *Frontline: Behind Taliban Lines*[17] website which provides transcripts, information on the various insurgent groups, and allows one to order the DVD. Some questions Soldiers could consider while watching this are:

1. What do you need to do to defeat the Taliban in a fight?

2. How can you protect the Afghan people from groups like the one depicted?

3. Why are the Taliban fighting against the United States?

Table 7. History Channel Declassified: The Taliban		
Utility Medium	Accessibility High	Interest Medium
Poor Soviet-Afghan war history	Cost: $18.49 Amazon	50 minutes long
Good account of Afghan civil war and the Taliban's rise	YouTube Goggle Videos	Dramatization

This documentary tells the story of how "from [the Soviet-Afghan] war would come chaos and from chaos the Taliban."[18] It reviews Osama Bin Laden, the CIA, and Pakistan's role in the Soviet-Afghan war. The description of Masud defeating the Soviets is overly simplistic. Much of the documentary is intentionally dramatized. The documentary describes how Afghanistan fell into civil war and the Taliban, led by Mullah Omar, rose to take control. It further describes how Osama bin Laden came to Afghanistan. The Taliban needed his finances and troops to combat the Northern Alliance and Osama bin Laden needed a safe haven and training base. The second part of the documentary is less dramatic and contains better information. This documentary can be purchased from Amazon or viewed on Google Videos at *Declassified The Taliban*[19] in a single 44 minute long clip, or viewed on YouTube in five parts starting at *Declassified: The Taliban (Part 1/5)*.[20] Some questions Soldiers could consider while watching this documentary include:

1. Why did the Afghan people support the Taliban's rise to power?

2. What is the connection between the Taliban and Osama bin Laden?

3. Why did Afghanistan have a civil war?

Table 8. Motherland Afghanistan		
Utility Medium	Accessibility High	Interest Medium
Detailed information on the medical plight of Afghans	Cost: $22.49 Amazon	73 minutes long
Insight into Afghan culture	Instant streaming from Netflix	Graphic medical scenes

Source: Sedika Mojadidi, *Motherland Afghanistan* (Aubin Pictures, 2007).

This documentary by Sedika Mojadidi, a first generation Afghan-American, follows her father and mother on two trips to Afghanistan. Her father, Dr. Qudrat Mojadidi and mother are both medical doctors. They live in Arlington, Virginia and journey to Afghanistan in 2003 and 2005 to work in Afghan hospitals and train Afghan doctors. The documentary depicts the atrocious state of Afghan medicine, shows scenes of surgery, and has footage of the countryside and of Kabul. The documentary is excellent but focuses in depth on one specific area–medical care. Because of this it may not be broadly interesting to Soldiers. Additional information can be found on the PBS website *Motherland Afghanistan*.[21] Questions Soldiers could consider while watching this documentary include:

1. What is daily life like for the average Afghan?

2. What social services are available to Afghans?

3. Who do Afghans turn to for their basic medical care?

Table 9. War Stories with Oliver North: The Battle for Afghanistan		
Utility High	Accessibility Medium	Interest Medium
Urban and rural fighting	Cost: $19.95 Amazon	45 minutes long
Tactical level issues		Dramatization

Source: Oliver North, *The Battle for Afghanistan* (Fox News Channel, 2008).

This short documentary covers actions by the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines and the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines. It provides a short overview of the war, chronicling Al Qaeda's terrorist attacks, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Afghan military history. The documentary incorporates unnecessary dramatizations but Soldiers will benefit from its depiction of combat. The fighting in Helmand shows the Taliban as a thinking, tough enemy. The footage of an IED attack and the following medical evacuation of a wounded Marine is also instructional. Finally, the importance of talking with the local people is discussed. Soldiers could consider thinking about the following questions as they watch this film:

1. How do you prevent IED attacks?

2. What can you do to ensure casualties survive?

3. How can you effectively relate to the Afghan people?

4. How can your unit separate the Taliban from the Afghan people?

Table 10. Pakistan: The Lost Generation		
Utility Medium	Accessibility High	Interest Medium
School issues in Pakistan	Cost: $24.99	18 minutes long
Islamitization of education	Instant streaming from PBS	Web site with additional information

Source: David Montero, *Pakistan: The Lost Generation* (PBS, 2010).

Pakistan: The Lost Generation covers the state of education in Pakistan, recounting that Pakistan has 68.5 million children between the ages of 5 to 18 and less than 30 million are in school. Those that are in school endure dreadful conditions. The documentary discusses the long term connection between Pakistan's education and stability. The PBS website *Pakistan: The Lost Generation*[22] contains information about US aid to Pakistan and interview transcripts. Questions Soldiers may consider while watching this documentary include:

1. What are the root causes of insurgency?

2. How is stability in Pakistan and Afghanistan interconnected?

3. What are the pros and cons of religious education?

4. How can education be used as an instrument of state policy?

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Table 11. Operation Enduring Freedom: America Fights Back		
Utility Medium	Accessibility High	Interest Low
Scenes of Afghanistan	Cost: $13.49	65 Minutes
Good prewar history	Instant streaming from Netflix	Propaganda tone

Source: Robert D.Kline, *Operation Enduring Freedom: America Fights Back* (Artisan Entertainment, 2002).

This 2002 documentary was co-produced by Artisan Entertainment and the Department of Defense. It is 65 minutes long and begins with an introduction by Donald Rumsfeld. The documentary is set to patriotic music and overviews America's grievances with Al Qaeda including the 1983 Marine Barracks bombing through 11 September 2001. The documentary also addresses Al Qaeda's grievances with the United States, including its support to Israel and involvement in the Gulf War. The documentary overviews the Taliban and chronicles the first year of America's invasion of Afghanistan. While the documentary has some good pictures and video footage of Afghanistan it carries the tone of US propaganda. At times the documentary proceeds slowly and has trouble holding its viewer's attention. It can be purchased for $13.49 from Amazon.com. It is also available from Netflix instant streaming.

Movies

Table 12. Charlie Wilson's War		
Utility Medium	Accessibility Medium	Interest High
US involvement in Soviet-Afghan War	Cost: $11.99 on Amazon	97 Minutes
Plight of Afghan Refugees	DVD rental from Netflix	Sex and drugs

Source: Mike Nichols, *Charlie Wilson's War* (Universal Pictures, 2007).

   Charlie Wilson's War is based on the bestseller by George Crile and features Julia Roberts, Philip Seymour Hoffman, and Tom Hanks. Hanks portrays Charlie Wilson, a Democratic congressmen from East Texas who womanizes and drinks excessively.[23] However, he becomes the champion of the Afghan Mujahedeen and maneuvers through Washington politics to provide substantial funding to aid their fight against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The movie is informative in that it portrays the American, and to a lesser degree Pakistani, involvement in the Soviet-Afghan war. It also addresses the plight of Afghan refugees and some of the USSR's brutal tactics. The movie easily holds one's attention with superb performances by the actors and constant sexual innuendo. The DVD also contains an interview with Charlie Wilson that is worth watching because he confirms the accuracy of the movie which one otherwise might think had substantial Hollywood spin. Soldiers could consider the following questions as the watch the film:

   1. Did the USSR successfully separate the Afghan people from the Mujahedeen?

   2. Can one person in the US Government make a difference?

3. What is Pakistan's interest in Afghanistan?

4. How could the Afghan experience during the USSR's occupation effect operations today?

YouTube

Table 13. 8 Imperatives of COIN		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
Gen Stanley McChrystal	Instant Streaming From YouTbue	40 minutes
ISAF CDR teaches COIN principles	8 parts	Captivating speaker

Source: Stanley McChrystal, *8 Imperatives of COIN* (ISAFMedia, 2010).

General Stanley McChrystal explains the complexity of counterinsurgency and eight imperatives to guide ISAF forces. He uses a fictional Afghan family to illustrate each of the counterinsurgency imperatives. General McChrystal delivers an insightful lecture in clear language that all Soldiers can understand. This is a must see for anyone headed to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan. The names of each of the eight parts of this video series on YouTube are: *8 Imperatives of COIN;*[24] *Protection & Partnering with the People;*[25] *Conducting a Comprehensive COIN Campaign;*[26] *Understanding the Environment;*[27] *Ensuring that Values Underpin our Effort;*[28] *Listen Closely–Speak Clearly;*[29] *Act as One Team;*[30] and *Constantly Adapt.*[31] Soldiers could consider the following questions while watching General McChrystal:

1. What type of relationship does General McCrystal want you to build with the Afghan people?

2. How can you understand the environment you are operating in?

3. How does counterinsurgency differ from conventional operations?

Table 14. General McCrystal Discusses the Troop Increase		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
ISAF Mission	Instant streaming from YouTube	30 minutes long
ISAF Strategy	3 Parts	Captivating speech

Source: Stanley McChrystal, *Gen. McChrystal in Kandahar, Troop Increase Part 1* (ISAFMedia, 2009).

General McChrystal, Commander, ISAF, made this speech to members of the coalition in Kandahar after President Obama announced the US Troop increase. It is 30 minutes long divided into three YouTube videos shown below. General McChrystal explains that while Afghanistan is beset by many insurgencies there are 3 main ones that have resulted in violence increasing from 2008 to 2009 by 60 percent.[32] However he states that this is "Not the end, but the end of the beginning."[33] Further, he explains that the mission of ISAF is to "prevent insurgency from being an existential threat to [Government of Afghanistan] and prevent [Al-Qaida] from using Afghanistan as a safe haven."[34] For these reasons Southern Afghanistan is the main effort and he will focus the new forces there. General McCyrstal believes the next 1 to 2 years will be decisive although the war will last longer.[35] Finally, General McCyrstal explains that he believes ISAF will win because they have clarity, capability, commitment and confidence.[36] The

clip can be viewed at the YouTube site *Gen. McChrystal in Kandahar, troop increase*.[37]

Soldiers could consider the following questions while watching General McCrystal:

     1. What is the mission in Afghanistan?

     2. What is General McCrystal's intent?

     3. What contribution can you and your unit make?

     4. How can you ensure your unit has clarity, capability, commitment, and

confidence?

Table 15. Cold War: Soldiers of God		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
History of the Soviet – Afghan War	Instant streaming from YouTube	60 minutes long
Interviews with Russian veterans		Zbigniew Brzezinski footage

Source: Alexander Dunlop, *Cold War: Soldiers of God* (CNN, 1998).

     This 1998 CNN Documentary is available only on VHS or the Internet. Originally

it was episode 10 of a lengthy series CNN produced on the Cold War. The documentary

is one hour long and excellent. On YouTube it is divided into six parts. *Soldiers of God*

discusses why the USSR invaded Afghanistan and the US role in the conflict. It also

contains fantastic footage of Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor of

the United States, addressing "Soldiers of God" near Afghanistan. He tells them "God is

on your side."[38] Other topics covered are the role of Pakistan in the conflict, Soviet

tactics, interviews with Soviet and Afghan fighters, atrocities, and Gorbachev's role in ending the war. The film can be watched at the YouTube website *Soviet Afghan War Documentary Part 1/5*.[39] Some questions Soldiers could consider while watching this documentary include:

1. How does it compare to *Charlie Wilson's War*?

2. Could the Mujahedeen have defeated the USSR without American aid?

3. What were the Mujahedeen and USSR tactics?

4. What significance does the Soviet occupation have in relation to the current war?

Table 16. Bing West: Finishing Firefights Difficult in Afghanistan		
Utility Medium	Accessibility High	Interest High
Importance of closing with the enemy	Instant streaming on YouTube	7:36 minutes long
Tactical level issues		Commentary

Source: Bing West, *Finishing Firefights Difficult in Afghanistan* (YouTube, 2007).

This seven minute and thirty-six second video features British, USMC, and Army firefights in Afghanistan. It has commentary from Bing West, a former Assistant Secretary for Defense, retired Marine, and noted military author. The video illustrates different terrain in Afghanistan, the physical challenge and confusion of firefights, positive identification of targets before firing a weapon, taking risk in the offensive, and the importance of closing with the enemy. Closing with the enemy and inflicting

casualties on the Taliban are a recurring theme in the video. The video can be viewed on the YouTube site *Bing West: Finishing Firefights Difficult in Afghanistan.*[40] Soldiers could consider the following questions while watching this clip:

1. How can you effectively close with the enemy?

2. Why is limiting civilian casualties important?

3. How can you gain the initiative against the Taliban?

Table 17. Ask ISAF Maj Gen Flynn		
Utility Med	Accessibility High	Interest Med
Afghan People	Instant streaming from YouTube	18 minutes long
Taliban	2 Parts	Dry speaker

Source: Michael Flynn, *Ask ISAF Maj. Gen. Flynn* (ISAFMedia, 2009).

Major General Flynn, chief of ISAF intelligence, discusses the nature of the Taliban, the impact of operations in Pakistan, challenges of intelligence sharing within the coalition, the Afghan people's perception of ISAF, IEDs, and the consequences of ISAF failure in Afghanistan. Major General Flynn believes that "this is the last chance for Afghanistan in this century."[41] The video is available in two parts on YouTube starting at *Ask ISAF Maj. Gen Flynn-Part 1.*[42] Soldiers could consider the following questions while watching the film:

1. Why do Afghans support the Taliban?

2. How can you defeat IEDs?

3. What is the significance of the international effort in Afghanistan?

iPhone Applications

Table 18. uTalk Dari		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
Learn 275 Dari words on your iPhone	Cost: $9.99 from iTunes Store	Easy, medium, and hard games in 9 categories
Male and Female voice	iPhone, iTouch	See how many of 2700 points you can earn

Source: *uTalk Dari* (EuroTalk Ltd., 2009).

uTalk Dari is a fun, easy to use application that immediately immerses the Soldier in speaking some basic Dari. It works "offline" so a Soldier can practice Dari with their iPhone anywhere, anytime. The games are simple but engaging and emphasize learning to speak. No attempt is made to teach the Persian script. Also, uTalk does not offer Pashtu, only Dari. It is a fun, fast way to learn the 275 Dari words and phrases that are included in the program. *uTalk Dari* can be purchased from the iTunes store and its website is called *uTalk–Now on iPhone and iPod Touch*.[43]

Table 19. Mental Case		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest Med
Flashcards on your iPhone	Cost: $2.99 from iTunes Store; free "Lite" version	Easy to use flashcard program
Download premade cards from flashcard exchange	iPhone, iPad, Mac	

Source: Drew McCormack, *Mental Case* (The Mental Faculty, 2007).

Mental Case Flashcards is an application for the iPhone that can partner with the *Mental Case* software for the Macintosh or stand alone. *Mental Case Flashcards* is ideal for studying Dari or Pashtu on the iPhone. A Soldier can take the vocabulary presented in any of the language software programs discussed below and create flashcards to reinforce their lessons. The flashcards are then on the iPhone, available to study at any time. There are also premade Dari flashcards on Flashcard Exchange, a flashcard sharing website, ready to be downloaded. The premade flashcards include Farsi script. Further, there are some flashcard sets on Flashcard Exchange that cover the history of the Taliban and Afghanistan geography.[44] These cards are not very good, but a Soldier could make anything he wanted–flashcards with the names of the important villagers (and their picture), local geography, unit history, etc. Flashcards can contain text or images, including photos taken with the iPhone. *Mental Case* can be downloaded from the iTunes Store.[45]

Table 20. Dari Cultural Orientation		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest Med
An introduction to Afghanistan and Dari Culture	Free, watch online or download for iPhone	5 Chapters ~ 60 minutes
	iPhone / PC / Mac	Dry

Source: *Dari Headstart iPod* (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, 2007).

Dari Cultural Orientation is a product of the Defense Language Institute. It

provides an overview of Afghanistan and an introduction to Dari Culture. The video is

broken into five chapters, Introduction, Religion, Tradition, Urban Life, Rural Life, and

Family. It presents the same information contained in the Dari Cultural Orientation online

instruction, but in video form. It can be watched or downloaded for the iPod from the

webpage *Dari Cultural Orientation*.[46] Although this video is dry, it is densely packed

with information and recommended for all Soldiers. Soldiers should also conduct the

online training, which is often more engaging than the video, at a different webpage with

the same name *Dari Cultural Orientation*.[47] As a Soldier watches the video he could

consider the questions:

1. How can I further understand the culture in the region of Afghanistan I will

serve in?

2. How is rural and city culture different in Afghanistan?

3. How can understanding the culture help me protect the Afghan people?

Table 21. Afghanistan Constitution		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest Low
The entire Constitution of Afghanistan on your iPhone	Cost: $1.99 from iTunes Store	
	iPhone, iTouch, iPad	

Source: Leyes de Bolsillo *Afghanistan Constitution* (Grupo Imaginacion Cibernetica, 2009).

This simple application contains all 12 chapters (with 162 articles) of

Afghanistan's Constitution in an easy to browse interface. The constitution is in English

without a Dari translation. It is a good reference document for all Soldiers. Browsing

through the constitution reveals fascinating tidbits. For example, article seven, states that

"the state shall prevent . . . cultivation and smuggling of narcotics" and article twenty

"the national anthem of Afghanistan shall be in Pashto."[48] Soldiers could consider the

following questions while pursuing Afghanistan's Constitution:

1. What is the constitutional role of Islam?

2. Does the constitution contain clauses which may cause conflict between

Afghans?

3. How can the constitution help you accomplish your unit's mission?

Table 22. Dari Headstart iPod		
Utility High	Accessibility Low	Interest Med
Teaches Dari and has specific military modules	Free but must be downloaded on a government computer or mailed to an official address	10 modules with military tasks
Video, audio, and pdf files	iPod	

Source: *Dari Headstart iPod* (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, 2007).

Dari Headstart for the iPod is a product of the Defense Language Institute. It

contains audio or video files that can be played on an iPhone (or any iPod). It also

includes a PDF file with all the phrases and their phonetic translation. The program can be downloaded from the Defense Language Institute Field Support site at the webpage *Headstart--Dari*.[49] However, you must download it to a government computer, copy the files to a CD or DVD, take the DVD home and unzip the files, then copy them into iTunes, and finally synch or iPhone with iTunes. Soldiers can use this to learn Dari in combination with the *Headstart* computer software or on their own. After initial language training having the audio files on the iPhone will allow a Soldier to conduct refresher training anytime, anywhere.

Games

Table 23. Peacemaker		
Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
Role Play the leader of Israeli or Palestine	Cost: $19.95	Turn based strategy
Political and economic sim	PC or Macintosh	Real video footage

Source: Eric Brown, *Peacemaker* (ImpactGames, 2007).

In Peacemaker the Soldier plays the leader of Israel or Palestine and your goal is to establish peace in the Middle East. To do so you have a range of security, political, and construction options available. However, you must take into consideration various world and local interest groups, in addition to the attitude of your own people. Many of the events in Peacemaker are based on real world events and include the actual news footage, giving Peacemaker a very realistic feel. This game is excellent and presents a Soldier with many of the same tools and tensions encountered in counterinsurgency. It can be

downloaded from the webpage *PeaceMaker*.[50] Some questions Soldiers could consider while playing this game include:

     1. How does a politician balance what his people want versus what he believes is in their best interest?

     2. How can security services and social programs be employed in concert to achieve peace? Which should be prioritized?

     3. What is the significance of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict to the war in Afghanistan?

     4. Are there similarities to the security issues faced by the Israelis and those faced in Afghanistan?

Table 24. Tropico 3		
Utility Medium	Accessibility Medium	Interest High
Rule an Island	Cost: $36.69 Xbox; $26.99 PC on Amazon	Campaign has different scenarios
Manage Population Happiness	Xbox 360, PC	Good graphics and music

Source: Gabriel Dobrev, *Tropico 3* (Haemimont Games, 2010).

     This game allows the Soldier to rule a remote island during the Cold War. The Soldier takes on the role of "El Presidente" and must manage the island's infrastructure, economy, and citizens. The game is relevant for Soldiers because if the citizens become discontent they will form an insurgency. While simplistic in many respects, the game is engaging and has the ability to choose individual citizens and monitor what the citizen's

concerns are. It is not a realistic "simulation" but it will allow a Soldier to think about population centric operations and wrestle with issues such as understanding what the people are concerned about and how to spend limited resources to gain the greatest impact. Some questions Soldiers may consider while they play the game:

    1. What are the concerns of individual Tropicans?

    2. How do you balance the interests of the various political fractions?

    3. How do you balance spending on social programs and security?

Table 25. Company of Heroes		
Utility Med	Accessibility Medium	Interest High
Company level fights in WWII	Cost: $12.39 for PC on Amazon	Real time strategy
Fire and maneuver	PC	Good graphics and sound effects

Source: John Johnson, *Company of Heroes* (Relic Entertainment, 2006).

      This game allows you to fight small tactical actions as the Americans, Germans, or British in World War II. It has beautiful graphics and sound effects that draw you into the plight of your squads. However, the game is real time strategy that limits your ability to plan. Further, the game incorporates a resource system that allows you to buy units and upgrade units–totally unrealistic. But it does simulate fire and maneuver well–players can use the terrain to their advantage, suppress enemy squads, and call for artillery support. Overall it can be used to reinforce sound tactics, but is primarily a fun game. Some questions Soldiers could consider while playing this game include:

1. How can you best employ your infantry squads and machine guns together?

2. When can the terrain give you a decisive advantage?

3. What combinations of forces are most effective?

Table 26. The Saboteur		
Utility Med	Accessibility Med	Interest Med
Resist the Nazis in occupied Paris	Cost: $18.96 Xbox; $25.99 PC on Amazon	Nudity and race car driving
Actions affect the population	Xbox 360, PC	Repetitive missions

Source: *The Saboteur* (Pandemic Studios, 2009).

In *The Saboteur* a Soldier gets to play a member of the French Resistance fighting against the Nazis in World War II occupied France. The game has a large sandbox world, in which the player can climb buildings and drive automobiles around Paris. Realistically, the player must blend in to survive, using stealth and disguises. Unrealistically the player can slaughter French civilians by running them down in a car without consequence. The game is fun and tries to show the moral of the French people by actually changing the way the city appears as the French Resistance successfully conducts missions against the Nazis. However, interaction with civilians is very limited and certainly does not allow for the brutal tactics the French resistance used to control their own people. Ultimately, this game is not recommended for self-development.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Table 27. Just Cause</td></tr>
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Utility Low	Accessibility Medium	Interest Med
Liberate an Island	Cost: $19.99 Xbox; $8.99 PC on Amazon	Parachuting and fighting are fun
Work with insurgent groups	Xbox 360, PC	Unrealistic

Source: Christofer Sundberg, *Just Cause* (Avalanche Studios, 2006).

This game pits the Soldier as a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agent overthrowing the ruler of San Esperito. While the game seems like it might have some relevance to Soldiers fighting against an insurgency, it has none. Your character in the game runs around in his CIA 'uniform' at all times, is automatically attacked by police and other security forces, and has very limited interaction with the local population. The game is fun–since you always wear your CIA parachute you can go sky diving at any time, steal cars, and engage in non-stop fire fights. But there is little to be learned from this game and is not recommended for self-development.

Language Training Software

Utility High	Accessibility High	Interest High
Teaches Dari with some customization to a Soldiers needs	Cost: Free with a .mil account	20 hours basic course 10 hours for each of six tailored courses
Teaches Dari (Afghan) cultural norms	Can be downloaded from the internet; Must have a PC	Combines traditional instruction with 3D game like scenarios

Table 28. Tactical Dari Language and Culture

Source: *Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (Alelo Tecnology, 2010).

Tactical Dari Language and Culture is an excellent program that focuses

language and cultural learning on a Soldier's requirements. The program has a core

module and six optional ones tailored to different possible missions Soldiers may have in

Afghanistan. It is important to note that Alelo also offers software entitled *Tactical*

Pashto and Soldiers should study either Dari or Pashto depending on where they will

serve and who they will work with in Afghanistan. The software is free to members of

the US Armed Forces and can be downloaded from the Tactical Language Training

Support Site[51] by registering with a .mil email address. A Soldier must have a quiet place

with a computer and microphone to use the software because it combines speech

recognition with an interactive computer game–along with some traditional language

training.

Table 29. Dari Headstart		
Utility High	Accessibility Low	Interest Med
Teaches Dari	Free, but must be downloaded on a government computer or mailed to an official address	10 modules with military tasks
Includes military terms	PC	Requires focused effort

Source: *Dari Headstart* (Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, 2007).

Dari Headstart is a product of the Defense Language Institute. It introduces

Soldiers to 750 terms chosen for their relevance to military missions.[52] The modules are

broken into tasks, and many tasks are written as engaging mini games. In addition to the

instructional modules, the Headstart DVD comes with a country overview of Afghanistan

and Dari culture. The Defense Language Institute instructors at the Command and

General Staff College use Headstart as their primary teaching tool. Many of the modules

would be challenging to complete without an instructor. The glossary and pronunciation

guide can be opened in separate windows to help a student complete the modules. The

program can be downloaded to a military computer from the *Dari–Headstart*[53] website or

shipped to an official unit address.

Table 30. Rosetta Stone Version 3 - Farsi		
Rosetta Stone Ltd		
Utility Low	Accessibility High	Interest Med
Teaches beginners Farsi, the Persian Language	Free through AKO	Attempts to enable the user to learn language without rote memorization
	PC or Mac	

Source: *Rosetta Stone Version 3 - Farsi* (Rosetta Stone Ltd., 2010).

    Rosetta Stone languages are available through "Army E-Learning." Soldiers can

establish an Army E-Learning account on AKO. While the software looks good, Soldiers

need to be aware that Dari is not available. Instead Farsi is available, and although Dari is

a dialect of Farsi, but there are significant differences. Farsi is available in three difficulty

levels each with four lessons. An individual unit takes eight hours to complete. Pashto is

available, but in only one level. The program uses interactive recording and evaluates

user's pronunciation as correct or incorrect. The program does not emphasize military tasks.

Secondary Research Question 3

The third secondary research question is: Which of the tools are the most effective at imparting the knowledge? Previously the tools were organized according to their technological classification. Here the tools are arranged by their usefulness according to the topics language proficiency, cultural capacity, history, counterinsurgency, and understanding the tactical environment. There is a table for each topic, and the relevant tools listed from the most useful at the top to the least useful at the bottom. The table also includes the type of tool, utility, availability and interest. Some tools clearly have applicability in multiple topic areas; however, each tool is only listed once, under the topic area it corresponds best to.

Table 31. Language Proficiency				
Name of Tool	**Type of Tool**	**Utility**	**Availability**	**Interest**
Tactical Dari Language and Culture	Language Training Software	H	H	H
uTalk Dari	iPhone Application	H	H	H
Mental Case	iPhone Application	H	H	M
Headstart iPod	iPhone Application	H	L	M
Dari Headstart	Language Training Software	H	L	M
Rosetta Stone Version 3 – Farsi	Language Training Software	L	H	M

Source: Created by Author.

Table 32. Cultural Capability				
Name of Tool	**Type of Tool**	**Utility**	**Availability**	**Interest**
Inside Islam	Documentary	H	H	M
Dari Culture Orientation	iPhone Application	H	H	M
Motherland Afghanistan	Documentary	M	H	M
Afghanistan Constitution	iPhone Application	H	H	L

Source: Created by Author.

Table 33. History				
Name of Tool	**Type of Tool**	**Utility**	**Availability**	**Interest**
Cold War: Soldiers of God	YouTube	H	H	H
Charlie Wilson's War	Movie	M	M	H
History Channel Declassified: The Taliban	Documentary	M	H	M
Operation Enduring Freedom	Documentary	M	H	L

Source: Created by Author.

Table 34. Counterinsurgency				
Name of Tool	**Type of Tool**	**Utility**	**Availability**	**Interest**
8 Imperatives of COIN	YouTube	H	H	H
General MyChrystal Discusses the Troop Increase	YouTube	H	H	H
PeaceMaker	Game	H	H	H
Obama's War	Documentary	H	H	H
The War Briefing	Documentary	H	H	H
Rethink Afghanistan	Documentary	M	H	H
Behind Taliban Lines	Documentary	H	M	H
Tropico 3	Game	M	M	H
Pakistan: The Lost Generation	Documentary	M	H	M
Ask ISAF Maj Gen Flynn	YouTube	M	H	M
The Saboteur	Game	M	M	M

Source: Created by Author.

Table 35. Understanding the Tactical Environment				
Name of Tool	**Type of Tool**	**Utility**	**Availability**	**Interest**
Bing West: Finishing Firefights Difficult	YouTube	M	H	H
War Stories with Oliver North: The Battle for Afghanistan	Documentary	H	M	M
Company of Heroes	Game	M	M	H

Source: Created by Author.

Organizing the tools by their use according to topics is important because it helps Soldiers develop a balanced self-development plan or focus in depth on a specific area. It also allows Soldiers to quickly select a tool and use it outside of a structured self-development plan.

Primary Research Question

The primary research question is: How can a Soldier create an effective self-development plan that will prepare him for a deployment to Afghanistan using technology supported tools? Potential self-development activities are only limited by a Soldier's imagination, but organizing these activities into a cohesive plan is limited by the time available. This example plan assumes that a Soldier has three hours a week to spend pursuing technology aided self-development in preparation for a deployment to Afghanistan, that there are four weeks in a month, and that the Soldier is six months from deploying. Thus the Soldier must create a 24-week or a 72-hour plan. Table 36 outlines an example plan designed with these constraints. The assumption of three hours a week is used as a guide and occasionally violated, but never by more or less than 40 minutes.

Table 36. Example Self-Development Plan		
Week	Activity	Time
1	*Rethink Afghanistan*	1 hr
	Gen McCrystal on the troop increase	30 min
	uTalk Dari "First Words" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
2	*uTalk Dari* "Food" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
	Charlie Wilson's War	1 hr
	uTalk Dari "Colors" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
3	*uTalk Dari* "Phrases" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
	Cold War: Soldiers of God	97 min
	uTalk Dari "Body" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
4	*uTalk Dari* "Numbers" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
	8 imperatives of COIN	40 min
	uTalk Dari "Time" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
5	*uTalk Dari* "Shopping" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
	Tropico 3 sandbox (Game 1 - save game after 1 hr)	1 hr
	uTalk Dari "Countries" lesson (all 3 games)	1 hr
6	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Set up and enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	Tropico 3 sandbox (Game 1 cont.)	1 hr
7	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	Tropico 3 sandbox (Game 1 cont.)	1 hr
8	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	Tropico 3 sandbox (Finish game 1)	1 hr
9	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	Inside Islam	100 min
10	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	History Channel Declassified: The Taliban	50 min
11	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PBS Frontline: Behind Taliban Lines	1 hr
12	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	Dari Cultural Orientation	1 hr
13	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PeaceMaker (Game 1–save game after 1 hr)	1 hr
14	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PeaceMaker (Game 1 cont.)	1 hr

15	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PeaceMaker (Game 1 cont.)	1 hr
16	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PeaceMaker (Finish game 1)	1 hr
17	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	War stories with Oliver North: The Battle for Afghanistan	45 min
	Bing West: Finishing Firefights Difficult in Afghanistan	10 min
18	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	Install and review *Afghanistan Constitution* on iPhone	1 hr
19	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	Motherland Afghanistan	73 min
20	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PeaceMaker (Game 2–save game after 1 hr)	1 hr
21	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PeaceMaker (Game 2 cont.)	1 hr
22	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PeaceMaker (Game 2 cont.)	1 hr
23	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PeaceMaker (Finish Game 2)	1 hr
24	*Tactical Dari Language and Culture* (TDLC)	1.5 hr
	Mental Case: Enter words learned from TDLC	30 min
	PBS Frontline: Obama's War	1 hr

Source: Created by Author.

The self-development plan contained in table 36 is simply an example, and every Soldier should modify it to suit their individual needs. As Soldiers develop their plan, they should consider what their role in Afghanistan will be, their unit's mission, and whether they will serve in a Dari or Pashtu speaking region. However, this example plan contains each type of knowledge previously discussed, that it; it grabs and hold's a

Soldier's attention, imparts some language proficiency, imparts some cultural capability, familiarizes Soldiers with recent Afghan history, strengthens a Soldier's understanding of counterinsurgency, and provides insight into the tactical environment in Afghanistan.

Grab and Hold the Soldier's Interest

A self-development plan must grab and hold a Soldier's interest because while the Army has decreed, "Self-development is just as important as other individual training,"[54] it has also clearly stated that "Soldiers will accomplish self-development training on their own time."[55] Thus when a Soldier chooses to spend time on self-development he is choosing to do it instead of spending time with his family or friends, so it is absolutely essential for self-development to be engaging. This plan begins with a controversial documentary, *Rethink Afghanistan*, which has the clear political objective of convincing America to withdrawal from Afghanistan. Despite its bias, the documentary is well done, and its efforts to show the gravity of the situation in Afghanistan will grab a Soldier's attention and help impress the importance of preparing for the upcoming job. *Rethink Afghanistan* is followed by General McCrystal discussing the troop increase, partly for balance, because General McCrystal certainly believes the mission can be accomplished, but also to reinforce the attention grabbing point that the situation in Afghanistan is critical. Every week of the plan includes a movie or documentary, such as *Charlie Wilson's War*, which is full of sex and drugs, or a game, such as *Tropico 3*, to hold the Soldier's interest. The language training on *uTalk Dari* and *Dari Tactical Language and Culture*, by far the most challenging portion of this plan, was specifically chosen because they are the most engaging of the language training options surveyed.

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This plan includes language training every week and integrates it with the iPhone, which Soldiers can use to study on their own anywhere at any time. The plan begins with *uTalk Dari*, a simple, engaging tool that will help Soldiers learn some basics. Then the plan progresses to *Tactical Dari Language and Culture*, a more complete language learning system that includes military tasks and focuses on speaking. Notice that General McCrystal's guidance did not require Soldiers to be able to write Dari, and the other programs surveyed, in addition to being less engaging, spent valuable time learning to write Farsi script. The plan dedicates about 30 hours to *Tactical Dari Language and Culture*, which is enough time to complete the introductory module and one optional module of the Soldier's choice. Finally, the plan includes time to enter phrases learned in *Tactical Dari Language and Culture* into *Mental Case*, a flashcard program for the iPhone. This is important because *Tactical Dari Language and Culture* requires a computer, quiet environment, and a working microphone. These commodities are hard to come by during a deployment or routine Army training. By entering words and phrases into *Mental Case* a Soldier can conduct refresher training anytime, anywhere–and might even be able to use the iPhone in a pinch to recall some phrases while talking with an Afghan. Finally, the importance of language and culture is emphasized throughout the documentaries, an example of which is *Obama's War* that describes Soldiers' frustration with an interpreter who doesn't speak English or the local dialect well.[56]

Cultural Capability

This plan imparts cultural capability to Soldiers through a variety of means. First, *Tactical Dari Language and Culture* includes instruction on proper body language during

conversations. Second, the *Dari Cultural Orientation* provides a solid overview of Afghan culture including a country overview of Afghanistan, an overview of Islam, urban life, rural life, and family life. Finally, cultural training is included in many of the documentaries including *Inside Islam* and *Motherland Afghanistan*.

History

This plan provides a solid overview of recent history through movies and documentaries. The plan starts off with examining the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in *Charlie Wilson's War* and *Cold War: Soldiers of God*. Then it looks at the rise of the Taliban in *History Channel Declassified: The Taliban*. Finally, the plan overviews the years since 2001 in *Operation Enduring Freedom*.

Counterinsurgency

This plan trains counterinsurgency through General McCrystal's YouTube videos; particularly his presentation entitled the *8 Imperatives of COIN*. After giving an overview of population centric counterinsurgency, Soldiers try to meet the expectations of the population in the games *Tropico 3* and *PeaceMaker*. Soldiers play the role of "El Presidente" and must decide how to spend limited resources to meet the needs of the people. If the people become unhappy they rebel. *Tropico 3* allows a Soldier to check on the individual motivation of every citizen on his island, balance the desires of various political parties, and plan an economy. *PeaceMaker* contains many of the same aspects, but has the added benefit of familiarizing the Soldier with the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. While both games are an abstraction and have nothing directly to do with Afghanistan, they are useful because they allow a Soldier to think about the needs of the people, how

to meet them with limited resources, balance the demands of various political groups, and fight an insurgency. This plan also covers counterinsurgency in various documentaries, such as *Obama's War*, which discusses population focused counterinsurgency and outlines how the Taliban is attempting to apply it with their shadow governments, efforts to engage the tribes, and even Taliban ombudsmen.[57]

<div align="center">Understand the Tactical Environment</div>

This plan does not attempt to train Soldiers in the warrior tasks but rather to impart some experience of the tactical reality and enemy through documentaries. *War Stories with Oliver North* covers an IED encounter in detail along with other tactical actions and *Bing West: Finishing Firefights Difficult in Afghanistan* reviews the importance and difficulty of closing with and destroying the enemy. *PBS Frontline: Behind Taliban Lines* provides insight into the motivation and tactical operations of the Taliban, and *History Channel Declassified: The Taliban* also provides insight into the Taliban's motivations and ideology.

So this example plan grabs and holds a Soldier's attention, imparts some language proficiency, imparts some cultural capability, familiarizes Soldiers with recent Afghan history, strengthens a Soldier's understanding of counterinsurgency, and provides insight into the tactical reality in Afghanistan. These are all important points, but Soldiers know best what they need to prepare for. Therefore a Soldier should feel free to customize the plan by choosing his own tools.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter, Chapter 4, "Analysis," answered the study's secondary and primary

research questions. To answer the secondary research questions the chapter identified

what types of knowledge technology supported tools could impart to Soldiers, provided a

catalog of various technology supported tools, and recommended which tools are the

most useful. To answer the primary research question this chapter provided a sample self-

development plan demonstrating how a Soldier could use various tools over a six month

period and address all the relevant types of knowledge. The next chapter, Chapter 5,

"Conclusion," discusses the implications of the study, makes some suggestions for

further research and then some recommendations.

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[3]Ibid., 1.

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[7]McChrystal, 2-3.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

> [Afghanistan is a] complex environment for which the most effective asset we have is a thinking, well-trained Soldier.
>
> — General Stanley McChrystal

The purpose of this study is to provide Soldiers with a resource to create their own self-development plans in preparation for a deployment to Afghanistan. The last chapter, Chapter 4, "Analysis," answered the secondary and primary research questions. This chapter, Chapter 5, "Conclusion," discusses some implications of the study, makes some suggestions for further research and then some recommendations.

Implications

The major implication of this study is that technology supported tools can effectively impart types of knowledge useful to Soldiers serving in Afghanistan. Some technology supported tools are probably much better at imparting knowledge than traditional tools. Examples of these are the language training programs and General McChrystal's YouTube videos. On the other hand, some technology supported tools, such as the documentary Operation Enduring Freedom, are not as good at imparting historical knowledge to a Soldier as a book. However, the second implication is that technology supported tools are undergoing a huge expansion and have vast untapped potential. This study encountered far more technology supported tools than it could evaluate. One need only to consider the rapid advance in computing power or Apple's recent release of the iPad to intuitively grasp the potential for technology supported tools. The third implication is that the technology supported tools are engaging enough to be

used in the self-development training domain. Many Soldiers already choose to spend significant portions of their free time interacting with technology supported tools, and thus are predisposed to conduct self-development training with them.

<div align="center">Recommendations</div>

<div align="center">For Further Study</div>

While the example self-development plan and the tools described in chapter 4 will help Soldiers create their own self-development plans, this study is by no means an exhaustive list of self-development tools for Soldiers. This study intentionally limited its scope to specific categories of technology-aided tools focused on Afghanistan, which made it manageable, but also limits its utility. As a result, additional topics for further study are suggested by simply broadening the scope of the study. Some suggestions include:

1. More tools in the same technology categories that this study researched (for example, the study did not examine every YouTube video or documentary on Afghanistan).

2. Other categories of technology aided tools focused on Afghanistan (such as smart phones other than the iPhone, audio books, and online collage courses).

3. All categories of tools focused on Afghanistan (this would include regular books).

4. Technology supported tools focused on Iraq.

5. Technology supported tools for general military professional development.

6. All tools for general military professional development.

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For Action

The Army should create a central resource depository for self-development tools for Soldiers. This depository could be a webpage, perhaps on the Army Training Network, but what is important is that Soldiers can easily access it from home. The depository should have instructions on how to build a self-development plan, a wizard to help build the plan, and lots of tools for self-development.

The reason for this recommendation is that while the Army clearly says that self-development is important, and that Soldiers must do self-development on their own, it does little to resource self-development. Most Soldiers do not know where to get started and because of this engage in random activities that may or may not be in the Army's interest. Professional military reading lists were created specifically to address this problem. Experts culled potential stacks of books down to the ones that imparted the most applicable knowledge for the investment of time. This helped Soldiers find books and focused them on reading material useful to whichever organization developed the list. The challenge is much greater when one considers all potential self-development tools, but so is the pay off. Imagine a Soldier who arrives at his new unit and is informed that they are deploying to Haiti in six months and he has to discuss his self-development plan with his squad leader the next day. He goes home, logs into the Army Training Network, clicks on the self-development portal, and browses the Haiti section and selects some documentaries recommended by the Defense Language Institute. Then he browses the physical fitness portion of the general Soldier area and pulls down information on running a half marathon from the Army Physical Fitness School. Finally he selects an army correspondence course related to his MOS. Then he organizes the items he selected

into a plan in the self-development plan building wizard, prints it out, and reviews it with his squad leader the next day.

This is not entirely far fetched because Army Regulation 350-1 requires that "Unit leaders will make available a robust and proactive range of culture and foreign language self-development tools and methods to encourage and support Soldiers. . . . Unit commanders will encourage Soldiers to take advantage of culturally-orientated gaming, computer simulations, and other on-line training opportunities. . . . Unit commanders will publish a cultural reading list based on the unit's regional focus."[1] So the Army recognizes that Soldiers need some resources to point them in the right direction for self-development, but units, especially tactical units, are not the subject matter experts on foreign language and culture, or the numerous other potential areas Soldiers might pursue self-development in. The Army should require the subject matter experts to make self-development resources available in a central depository for Soldiers.

<center>Summary and Conclusions</center>

This study was built to be a resource Soldiers can use to help create a self-development plan prior to deploying to Afghanistan. To this end, the tools and example plan are located at the website *Self Development for Soldiers Deploying to Afghanistan*.[2] This study focused on technology supported self-development tools because these tools tend to hold a Soldier's interest, and a Soldier's interest level is the key factor in determining if he will spend his off duty time pursing self-development. These technology supported self-development tools researched include documentaries, movies, YouTube videos, iPhone applications, language training programs and games. The study then organized the tools it found into an example self-development plan that a Soldier

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could execute over a six-month period. This study is important because it assists Soldiers

by cataloging relevant tools in one location (much like a reading list) and demonstrates

how they can be combined in a comprehensive self-development plan.

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